



SPORTS
TRAINING | THERAPY

NFL vets talk strategy (and smack) at D1 camp

Campers go one-on-one with pros in effort to polish game

By CHIP CIRILLO
Staff Writer

FRANKLIN — It wasn't all that long ago that Ingle Martin was attending football camps as a young player out to improve his game.

The Green Bay Packers quarterback found himself on the other end of drills Saturday, working as an instructor at the Iron Sharpens Iron Football Series Camp at D1 Sports Training and Therapy in Cool Springs.



Martin watches Nulsmer throw during the Iron Sharpens Iron football camp. The camp aims to provide one-on-one training opportunities that larger camps can't offer.

"For me, this is what I kind of grew up doing, going to camps and spending my weekends and summers playing whatever: football, baseball, basketball or soccer," Martin said. "It's kind of come full circle, and this is a chance to come back and coach a little bit. I'm just going to spread what I've learned so far to them."

The Packers No. 3 quarterback and his wife are spending the offseason in Brentwood with his in-laws.

Martin said camps like D1's helped him

develop as a player. He was an All-American at Montgomery Bell Academy in 2000 before moving on to Florida and Furman.

"Starting out, I went to an MBA camp with coach (Ricky) Bowers when I was in middle school and stuff like that," Martin said.

"Then I kind of elevated and went on to Tennessee's camps or Georgia's camp or Alabama's camp or whatever. You get to work with their quarterback coach and get some instruction and base fundamentals."

More camps planned

It was Martin's turn to teach the fundamentals Saturday during the offensive camp that opened a three-part series. A defensive camp will follow on Saturday, and a camp for offensive linemen is planned for July 20.

Former Titans tight end Frank Wycheck of Franklin and former Titans wide receiver Chris Sanders of Brentwood worked with the receivers.

"I love being around the kids and teaching them," Wycheck said. "I actually haven't been a part



Riverdale's Gabe Welker gets advice on proper form from Green Bay Packers backup quarterback Ingle Martin during the Iron Sharpens Iron football camp. Martin says it wasn't all that long ago when he attended similar camps with hopes of picking up tips. (STEVEN S. HARMAN / THE TENNESSEAN)



Green Bay Packers' backup quarterback Ingle Martin, center, on Saturday instructs Ensworth High School's Jackson Nulsmer, left, and Riverdale's Gabe Welker during the Iron Sharpens Iron football camp at D1 Sports Training and Therapy in Cool Springs. (PHOTOS BY STEVEN S. HARMAN / THE TENNESSEAN)

IF YOU GO

What: Iron Sharpens Iron Football Series Camp

Where: D1 Sports Training and Therapy, Cool Springs

Defensive camp: Saturday, noon registration, 1-4 p.m. Instructors: former NFL linebacker Lemanski Hall, former Titans linebacker Peter Sirmon, Titans assistant secondary coach Marcus Robertson

Offensive line camp: July 20, noon registration, 1-4 p.m. Instructors: Titans center Kevin Mawae, former Titans tackle Jason Mathews.

Cost: \$200 per athlete. Two weeks of free training for anyone who preregisters.

More info: 778-0000

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of a lot of camps on the field training. I'm just trying to pass some tips and technique along to kids who maybe aren't getting taught properly or give them some helpful ideas to take into their seasons coming up."

With so many players in one spot, some good-natured trash talking is unavoidable.

"OK, I'm going to have to call security and get him out of here," Sanders kidded Martin before the camp began. (Martin's Florida Gators beat Sanders' alma mater, Ohio State, for the NCAA championship in football and basketball last season). "I'm going to have to say, 'go Bucks' while he's over there."

There's room to grow

Will Bartholomew of Franklin, a former Tennessee Volunteers fullback who suffered a career-ending knee injury in training camp with the Denver Broncos in 2002, coached the running backs.

"I went to a lot of camps that were big — you know, you've got 100, 200 kids there," Bartholomew said. "I never got to go to anything small with a lot of private instruction, and that's what we're about at D1. It's giving those kids a lot of that face-to-face time."

There were only five campers participating at the offensive camp, but instructor Lemanski Hall of Franklin said the first-year camp hopes to grow a little bit in the future. The former NFL linebacker spent part of his career with the Titans.

"We could have easily had more kids, but the goal is to get 25 at the max, so we can really focus in and teach them the fundamentals," Hall said. "Our job is to help these kids get scholarships, whether it's DI or DII or whatever it is."

Franklin running back Anthony Steele signed up for the camp after talking to Hall in church.

"This is my fourth camp," Steele said. "They keep me in shape and focused. I just try to listen and see what they tell me and apply it back to my techniques."

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